

The Power of Meow!

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Deyanna
and
Skippy



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Human-Animal Interaction webinar
August 1, 2024



Meet Jacquie

- ❖ Began practicing play therapy in 1990
- ❖ Licensed Clinical Social Worker
- ❖ Registered Play Therapist -Supervisor
- ❖ Began Animal Assisted Play Therapy® in 2012
- ❖ Certified Animal Assisted Play Therapist -Supervisor
-Instructor
- ❖ Diploma - Animal Behavior Science and Technology
- ❖ Certified Animal Ethology and Behavior Specialist
(cats)

Meet the Cats Who Live With Jacque



Deyanna (nicknamed Anna) is the loving, laid back Ragdoll who first joined Jacque on her AAPT journey.



Paka Muchacho is a rescued orange tabby. His unusual name is a mix of Swahili and Spanish which literally translated is “Cat Boy.”



Skippy is a gregarious orange tabby who loves people and catnip.

Luna is also a Ragdoll and is the newest member of the family. She is playful!



Some Preliminaries

- All content and media in this presentation is © by Jacqueline George or Dr. Risë VanFleet. All rights are reserved.
- People in these videos have given their permission. This permission to share does NOT extend to others who watch this presentation.
- If you recognize any person, your respect of confidentiality is vital
- Interns
- Videos chosen to illustrate AAPT Principles and Goal Areas
- Videos themselves: words / tone
- The Principles and Goal Areas have considerable overlap.
- Different videos of one person show how multiple Principles and Goal Areas can be addressed
- Videos are from two different offices I have worked in



Play is the #1 avenue of learning.

Play is the way children:

- *experiment with ideas
- *gain understanding of life
- *practice give & take of relationships
- *increase self respect & self esteem
- *help child accept responsibility
- *increase child's ability to cope
- *reinforce trust in others
- *develop mental, physical & social skills
- *improve functioning at home, school, etc.
- *help child identify & accept feelings
- *improve problem solving ability

Association for Play Therapy's
First Definition of
Play Therapy:

PT is the systematic use of a *theoretical model* to establish an *interpersonal process*

wherein *trained play therapists* use the *therapeutic powers of play*

to help clients *prevent or resolve* psychosocial difficulties and achieve optimal growth and development.



Animal Assisted Play Therapy® is a registered trademark of the Family Enhancement & Play Therapy Center, Inc. (and its International Institute for Animal Assisted Play Therapy®)

Co-created by

Risë VanFleet, PhD, LP, RPT-S, CDBC, CAEBI

Tracie Faa-Thompson, M.A. AASW, PGdipNDPT, CAEBI



Winner of the Dog Writers Association of America
2018 MAXWELL Award in the Human-Animal Bond category



Animal Assisted Play Therapy



Risë VanFleet
Tracie Faa-Thompson

Forewords by Aubrey H. Fine and Patricia McConnell



Book by AAPT's Co-creators

Winner of the 2018 Maxwell Award

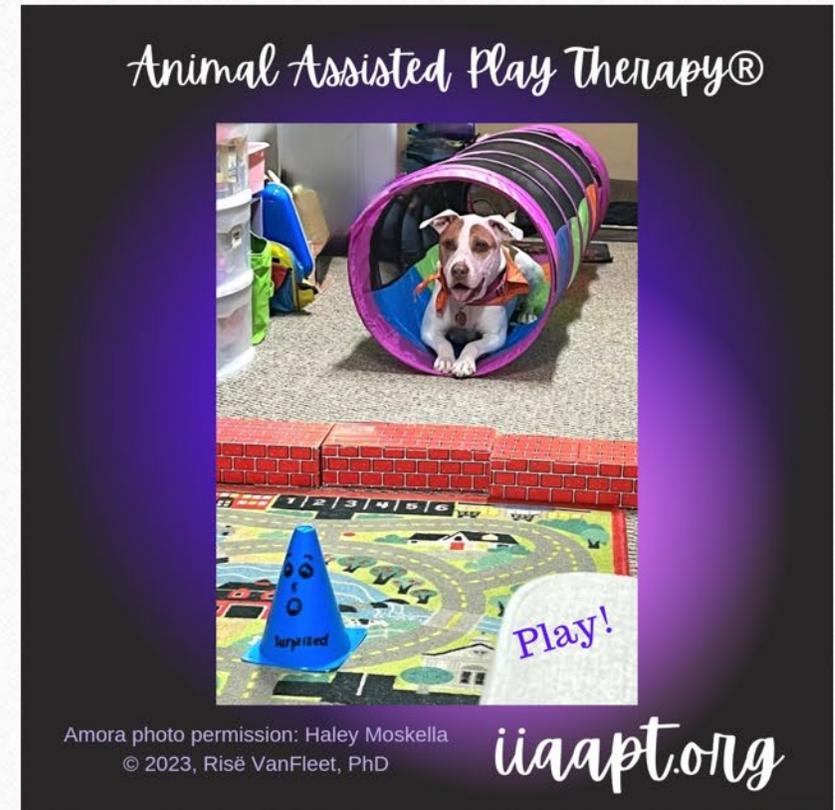


Best book on the Human-Animal Bond

- VanFleet, R., & Faa-Thompson, T. (2017). *Animal Assisted Play Therapy*. Sarasota, FL: Professional Resource Press. (450 pp.)
- Includes details about AAPT as a distinct therapeutic modality, including principles, methods, and case studies
- Emphasizes animal welfare, well-being, sentience, and agency, and the full consideration each for animal-assisted interventions and services
- Centered on reciprocal, respectful, and enjoyable relationships between animals and humans

What Is Animal Assisted Play Therapy®?

- AAPT “is the integrated involvement of animals in the context of play therapy, in which appropriately trained therapists and animals engage with clients primarily through systematic playful interventions, with the goal of improving clients’ developmental and psychosocial health, while simultaneously ensuring the animal’s well-being and voluntary engagement. Play and playfulness are essential ingredients of the interactions and the relationship.” (VanFleet, 2004; VanFleet & Faa-Thompson, 2017).
- Multidisciplinary approach that fully integrates animal assisted services, play therapy, ethology, animal behavior, and several other fields.
- Applicable for all ages, individuals, families, and groups. Used for a wide range of mental health, allied health, and educational goals. Multiple species can be involved.



AAPT Demonstrated Competencies

- **Therapist-Animal Relationship Competencies**

- Ethology, Behavior, Development
- Senses of Species & Individual
- Reciprocal Relationship Building
- Fluency in Animal Body Language
- Animal Responsive Handling & Decision-Making™
- Animal Friendly Training
- Proactive and Split Attention
- Natural Environment & Awareness

- **Animal-Related Competencies**

- Selection of Animals
- Animal Appropriateness Scale™ (personality & preferences)
- Animal's Trained Behaviors
- Therapy Involvement Plan™ for Each Animal

- **Therapy/Education Competencies**

- Professional Therapist or Educator Competence
- Play Therapy Competence
- Planning, Conducting, Facilitating, & Processing AAPT Sessions

- **Ethics & Welfare Competencies**

- Adherence to All Professional Ethical Standards
- Effectiveness of Intervention (evidence of goal attainment)
- Fidelity to AAPT Values & Principles (re. clients AND animals)
- Adherence to Highest Welfare & Well-Being Standards
- Voluntary Participation of All



Animal Assisted Play Therapy® Guiding Principles



ENJOYMENT & CHOICES - Sessions are enjoyable for animals & clients. Participation is completely voluntary for all. Animals always have an exit route available.

RELATIONSHIP - AAPT is always about relationship, not control. Healthy, humane relationships feature reciprocity & mutual benefit.



PROCESS-ORIENTATION - Is important for achieving goals. The journey is important & must be flexible, allowing for unexpected events, expression, & creative problem-solving.

FOUNDATIONS - AAPT is grounded in well-established theories & empirically supported practices in lifespan development, clinical intervention, play therapy, education, ethics, & welfare.



RESPECT - Is equal & reciprocal for clients & animals.

SAFETY - Activities are physically & emotionally safe for all involved. The therapist immediately intervenes in unsafe situations.

ACCEPTANCE - Is shown to clients & animals for who they are. Empathy for animals & clients guides interventions. Natural animal behavior is valued.



ANIMAL-FRIENDLY TRAINING - Only kind, playful, animal-centered, positive, & relationship-based training methods are used to prepare animals. Equipment is minimized, & aversives are never used.

AGENCY & EMPOWERMENT - Are maximized for animals & clients. Emphasis is on discovering their competence & confidence and following their unique paths.



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AAPT Principles

- Respect
- Safety
- Acceptance
- Enjoyment & Choices
- Relationship
- Animal-Friendly Training
- Agency & Empowerment
- Process Orientation
- Foundations

AAPT Principle #1 ACCEPTANCE



Neither the child nor the animal is expected to be something they are not

Deyanna - Natural Baseball



AAPT Principle #2

Empowerment

Support of therapist encourages growth & independence to build competence and confidence for both child and animal



Empowerment



AAPT Principle #3

Enjoyment & Choices

People and animals have the
option
to not participate

Enjoyable / pleasant



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AAPT Principle #4

Foundations

Ethical, quality clinical
practice

+

Ethical, humane treatment
of animals



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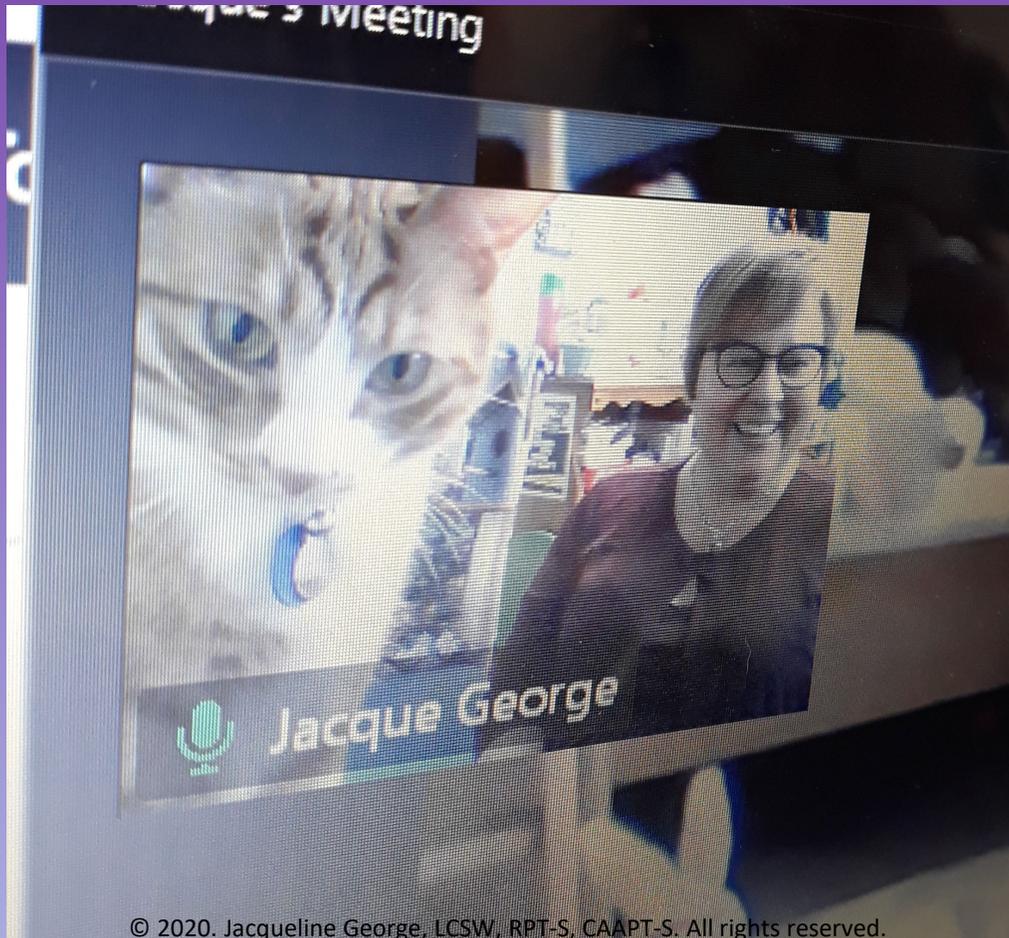


AAPT Principle #5

Process

Unexpected events are woven into the session to meet needs of client and animal.

The process involved to achieve a goal is **MORE** important than an outcome.



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Process: Anxiety Body Language



AAPT Principle #6

Relationship



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Not control
Mutual respect and tolerance
Respond to feelings of cat and client
PLAYFUL - humane, empathic, healthy relationship

Relationship



AAPT Principle #7

Respect

Animal's needs are
equal to
human needs

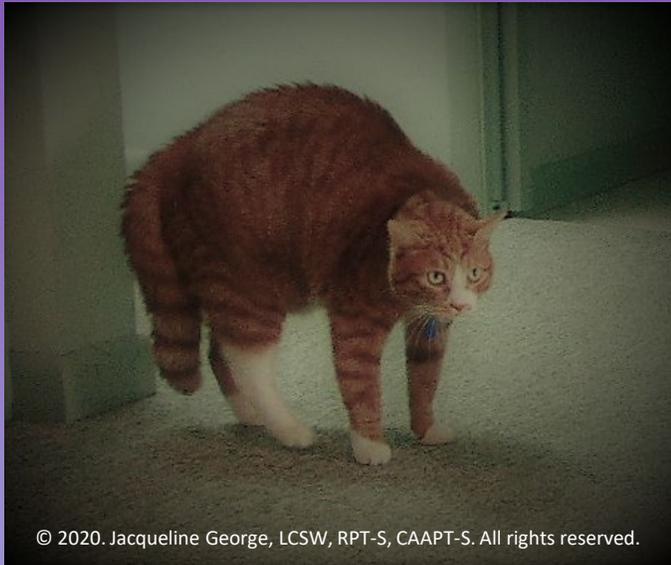


Respect: Calling Cat to Therapy Room



AAPT Principle #8

Safety



Physically & emotionally safe

AAPT Principle #8

Safety (continued)



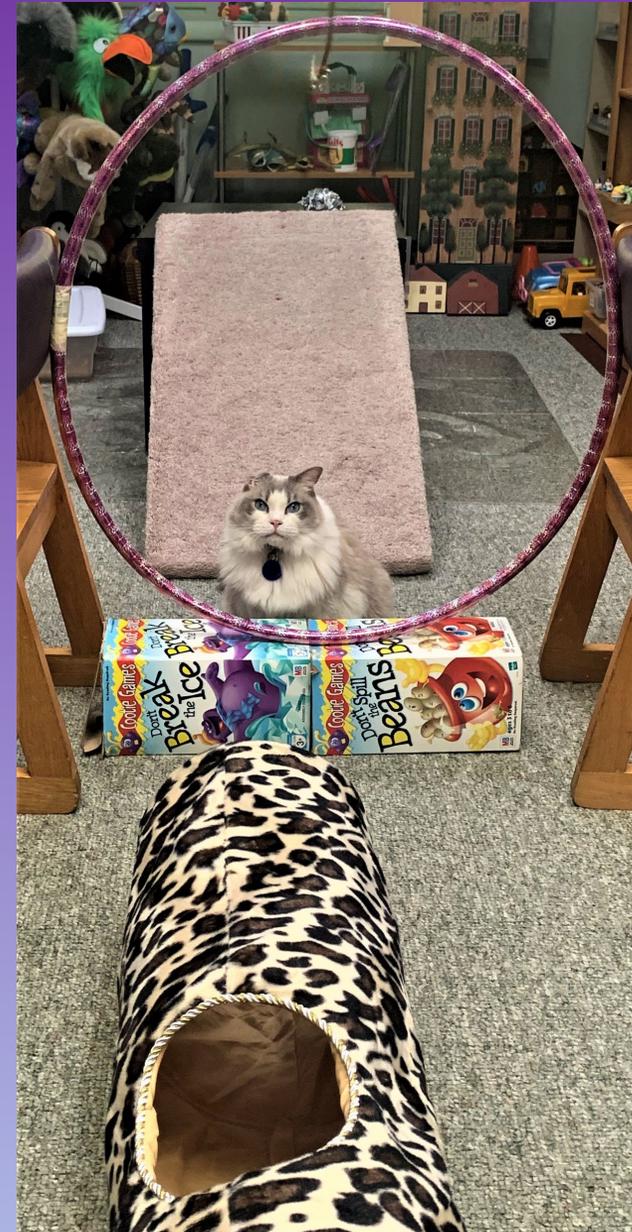
Limits set to keep safety



AAPT Principle #9

Training

Methods: positive reward
play based
relationship based



AAPT Principle #9

Training

Non-aversive
techniques



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AAPT Goal Area #1

Attachment / Relationship

Being cared for
Learning to relate to another
Healthy attachment



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Attachment: Holding Skippy

Hol

AAPT Goal Area #2

Empathy

Care giving

Empathy

*Consideration of well-being
of another*



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Empathy: Dart Forgiveness



AAPT Goal Area #3

Self-Efficacy

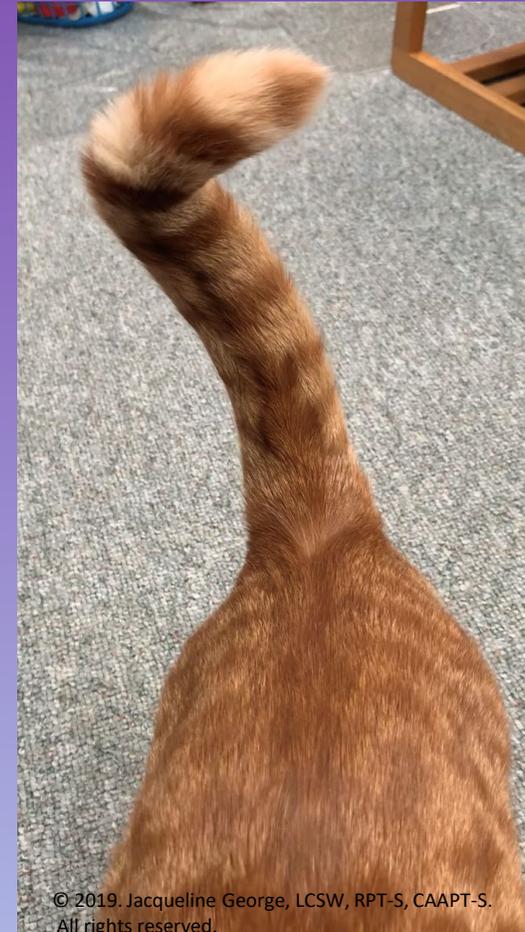


Safety and protection
Develop skills and confidence handling the animal

AAPT Goal Area #4

Self-Regulation

Develop patience,
perseverance,
enhance communication skills
with animal (then others),
improve emotional &
behavioral regulation



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Self Efficacy & Self Regulation



AAPT Goal Area #5

Specific Problem Resolution

Frustration tolerance
Anxiety
Anger
Trauma
etc.



Specific Problem Resolution: Manners



Free Resource!

- 60-slide PowerPoint (pdf format) on understanding animals in the therapy context
- Finalist in the Dog Writers Association of America competition for 2021-2022 in the category of Online Article on Behavior & Training
- Instructions & permissions for use included
- To obtain, contact Dr. Risë VanFleet at info@risevanfleet.com & just ask for this by title!

This project was a Finalist in the Dog Writers Association of America competition for 2021-22 in the category of Online Dog Article or Blog Entry on Behavior and Training!



DO THERAPY ANIMALS ENJOY THEIR WORK?

... HERE'S HOW TO FIND OUT

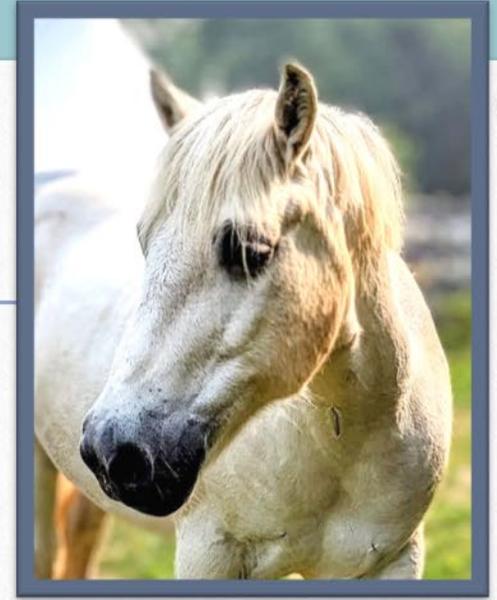
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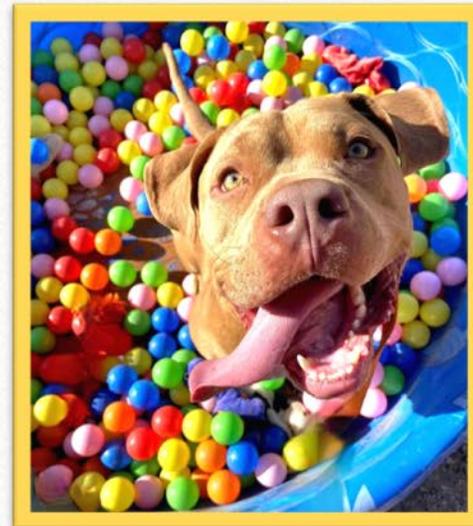

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THANK



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YOU!



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